

## Kidnap Fugitive Forced to Delay Return to U.S.

DETROIT, Aug. 28 (UPI)—Robert Williams, self-styled black revolutionary who fled the United States eight years ago to avoid trial on kidnaping charges, plans to return to Detroit Sept. 6, one week later than originally planned, his attorney said today.

Milton Henry said Williams had run into difficulty getting the plane flights he planned earlier.

An FBI spokesman in Washington has said Williams will be arrested on a fugitive warrant on his return.

Williams is charged in North Carolina with kidnaping Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Stegall of Marshville, N.C., during a racial disturbance in Monroe, N.C., in 1961. A federal fugitive warrant for his arrest followed.

Williams fled this country in 1961 and went to Cuba, China, North Vietnam and Africa.

# Black Militant Wanted by FBI Plans to Return

From News Dispatches

DETROIT, Aug. 25—Robert F. Williams, a black nationalist who fled the United States in 1961 to avoid kidnaping charges, plans to fly to Detroit direct today from London Saturday, attorney Milton Henry said today.

If he does, an FBI spokesman said in Washington, he will be arrested on the spot.

Henry said: "Williams isn't guilty of anything and we feel the justices here are more law-abiding than in some other jurisdictions. We feel he

will get a better chance here. That's the reason for flying directly here."

Williams, 44, who has been in exile in Cuba, Red China and most recently Tanzania, is charged with kidnaping Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Stegall during a racial disturbance in Monroe, N.C., in 1961.

Williams allegedly abducted the white couple and held them hostage during racial rioting in Monroe in an effort to gain release of arrested Negroes. The Stegalls told police a group of Negroes stopped their car, ordered them out and held them overnight in a house in a Negro district.

Williams had charged he and his followers were being assaulted by roving bands of white toughs, with police refusing to interfere.

The Stegalls were released unharmed, the unrest subsided and Williams later fled to Cuba via Canada.

He was elected president of the black nationalist Republic of New Africa in 1968 while he was abroad. The RNA seeks to build a separate, independent black nation in five southern states.

From Cuba, Williams broadcast messages back to the United States and wrote a book, "Negroes with Guns," which helped form the definition of self-defense used by some segments of the Black Power movement.

In 1965, disgruntled with Cuba, he moved to China. Two years later, he tried to have the charges against him dropped so he could return to the United States. Within the past year, he moved to Tanzania.

Warrants still are out for five suspects in the kidnap case, including Williams; a woman, Willie Mae Mallorie; Harold Reap; Richard Crowder; and John Lowery. The latter four were convicted of kidnaping in 1964, but the North Carolina Supreme Court overturned the verdict because there were no Negroes on the grand jury that indicted them. A new grand jury was formed and it indicted all five, including Williams, on kidnap charges.

When the four defendants in this country failed to appear in court in 1965 for a second trial, their bails were forfeited. This action was fought to the U.S. Supreme Court. Union County, N.C., early this year collected the \$30,000 in bail money.

Attorney Henry said that since the convictions of the four were overturned, the fugitive warrant for Williams should be considered void.

Williams was elected president of the RNA at its founding convention at the shrine of the Black Madonna in Detroit.

In March of this year, members of the RNA were involved in a shooting incident with Detroit police during the separatists group's first annual convention. One policeman was killed and another wounded. Four RNA members were injured.

Williams's wife and two children flew to Detroit from London last week. He also has a sister and two brothers in the Detroit area.

## The Airline, by Franz Kafka

By ANTHONY LEWIS

LONDON—In the 1950's the State Department forbade numerous Americans to leave the United States on vague grounds of suspect beliefs or associations. Those restraints on the freedom to travel were found unlawful by the Supreme Court in 1958, and Congress has declined to reimpose them.

Now it appears that an American abroad may be prevented from returning to his own country—without any official ruling, without a reason or a hearing. That is the threatened import of the mysterious case of Robert F. Williams.

To most people Williams would not be a sympathetic figure. He was a premature and therefore unromanticized advocate of black power. Eight years ago he fled the United States when charged with kidnapping in a confused North Carolina racial incident. Since then, from platforms in Havana and Hanoi and Peking, he has denounced American "racism."

But Williams's uncongenial qualities have nothing much to do with the issues of liberty posed by his present situation. The great cases that define freedom have often involved unappealing characters.

The outline facts in Williams's case are as follows:

Several weeks ago, in Dar es Salaam, he decided to return home and face the kidnapping charges. From the American Embassy he obtained a travel document good only for travel to the United States.

Williams bought a ticket for a United Arab Airlines flight from Dar es Salaam to London, and then on a connecting Trans World Airlines flight to Detroit. The ticket showed both flights as "O.K."—confirmed.

### The Airlines' Refusal

Last Friday Williams flew without incident to London. But before he reached the immigration control desk at London Airport, he was stopped by detectives, searched painstakingly and taken off to a prison. He says he was not allowed to see a lawyer or use a telephone.

At the same time Trans World Airlines said it would not honor his ticket to fly to Detroit. The only explanation given by the airline, in a subsequent public statement, was the non-explanatory one that his carriage "would be inimical to the best interests of T.W.A. and its passengers."

Pan American also refused to fly Williams. Two non-American trans-Atlantic carriers, BOAC and Air India, then took the same position.

On Saturday the American

Embassy here in London said it could arrange to have an escort accompany Williams home. This was evidently to settle any concern about violent behavior by Williams on the flight, but the airlines did not change their position.

Sunday, still without giving Williams any recourse to a lawyer, British officials took him to the airport and prepared to put him on a United Arab Airlines plane for Cairo. But the plane happened to hit a truck, and the flight was canceled. Williams went back to prison.

The next day he was brought to the airport for the Cairo flight again. But by now interested persons knew of his situation and intervened. In the presence of two lawyers, a civil liberties organization spokesman and two American friends Williams protested that he had never been in Cairo in his life and would have to be taken there by force.

### Conspiracy or Not

Five minutes before the plane left, British officials dropped the idea of putting him on it. Except for the improbable accident at the airport on Sunday, and the outside intervention on his behalf, he would have been in Cairo by now.

Williams blames his troubles on the Central Intelligence

Agency. One unhysterical Englishman who is trying to help him maintains that there are signs of C.I.A. interference.

Those who instinctively reject the conspiratorial view of life will discount the C.I.A. charge. The trouble is that the alternative is not very pleasant either. It is that the airlines flying the Atlantic have somehow simultaneously decided not to fly a particular passenger back to his own country, with the result that he cannot get there. And Britain, at the same time, does its best to send the man in the other direction without any legal proceeding.

It is easy to understand why airlines may be nervous these days, after all the contemptible examples of hijacking. But very few passengers would go on a plane with as much assurance against such behavior as Williams—searched and escorted.

Personally, Williams may be seen as a disreputable outcast or as a man now willing to pay for his errors. But his character is not the point. Any American might try to imagine himself abroad and blandly told by every airline that he cannot fly home—for unstated reasons, perhaps at some government agency's inspiration and perhaps not, with no way to find out and no one officially responsible.